

AN 'EASY OLD GINK'

By GAIL WHITEHOUSE.

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The flabby-faced young man gazed with gloomy indifference at the straw hat floating in the mud puddle. Presently, as he observed from the corner of his left eye the approach of a bare-headed, elderly gentleman, an expression almost of intelligence dawned upon his doughlike features.

Then, as if performing a rite, he bent above the puddle, tenderly removing the hat, he wiped it carefully with a sky-blue handkerchief. As the gentleman drew up smiling and puffing, he presented the hat with grave ceremony.

"Course, if it hadn't been for me," he suggested, tentatively.

The elderly gentleman chuckled, fumbled through his trousers pockets and brought to light a few pieces of silver and a crumpled bill. He passed the bill to the youth.

"Here, son," smiling cordially he pulled the hat more firmly over the ears and turned in the direction of the square. "Nice lad," he told himself. "Nice and accommodating."

The flabby-faced young man eyed the bill, thrust it carelessly into a convenient pocket and again sought the telegraph pole with his spinal column.

"Easy old gink," he mumbled.

At the edge of the square the elderly gentleman paused, then proceeded toward the nearest bench, one end of which was occupied by a small, black-haired child and a jaded doll.

The child noted his approach with sullen eyes. Thoughtfully she grasped the doll and gave it a little shove along the bench.

"Hello, mister."

The elderly gentleman peered down, his round face beaming with good humor.

"Well, good afternoon, sister. Going to let me sit beside you, eh?"

The child nodded gravely.

The elderly gentleman seated himself in the indicated spot, only to suddenly rise again, a puzzled expression on his good-natured face.

"Bless my soul!" he ejaculated.

With a convincing wall the child grabbed up the doll.

"Aw, mister, you squashed her!"

"Now, that's too bad," sympathized the elderly gentleman, thrusting his hand into a trousers pocket.

The child watched furtively for the reappearance of the hand. "An' she cost two dollars," she gesticulated tragically.

"Never you mind," soothed the elderly gentleman, drawing forth the contents of his pockets (there was no bill in evidence this time). He counted out four 50-cent pieces. "Here you are, try a brunette one this time? They're said to . . . er . . . wear better than blonds."

The child pocketed the money, stared blankly at the whimsical face of him whom she afterward termed "de easiest gink I ever runned up against," and sprinted down the path.

"Bless my soul!" murmured the elderly gentleman. "What a funny little kid. What a nice little kid!"

A few feet down the path in an artificial pond a band of green-necked ducks, gave utterance to a series of loud quacks.

Again the elderly gentleman crossed back to Main street and turned in at the little delicatessen on the corner.

"Got anything nice for hungry ducks?" he greeted the marcelled lady across the counter.

"You can get canary seed in the drug store across," she mumbled gloomily.

His attention centered on a pile of currant buns. "Well, now, I think I'll have a dozen of those."

The lady across the counter counted out ten buns, dropped them into a paper bag and watched the elderly gentleman depart with it.

"Ain't he the easy old gink?" she remarked absently to her reflection opposite.

And the elderly gentleman, hastening back to the square, chuckled inwardly: "Canary seed! What a nice, witty, young lady. Canary seed!"

He carried the buns down to the water and watched happily while an occasional duck pecked mildly at his offerings. Being somewhat near-sighted he was unaware that eight of the ten buns sank untouched and undesired into the muddy bottom of the pond.

As he passed down Main street the marcelled lady watched him languidly through the window of the delicatessen shop. A dark-haired child, carrying a dilapidated blond doll, chewed half-heartedly at a cream puff and stared at him with sullen eyes. A flabby-faced young man spat gloomily into a mud puddle and greeted him with a feeble, "Evening, Mr. Perkins."

And the elderly gentleman, munching at the third peppermint drop, climbed to his neat little hall room. As he turned the key in the lock he chuckled reminiscently: "Weren't those ducks hungry, though? Bless my soul!"

From Farm to City in New Zealand.

In marked contrast with what is reported to be the effect of unemployment in this country, where the movement is from the city to the farms, the dismissed workers of New Zealand are flocking from the country to the cities, because farmers are cutting wages and discharging many of the hands they employed during the recent era of high prices.—The Living.

END OF PERFECT DAY

By GERTRUDE CUSHING.

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There is something about the subway—any subway—at 6 o'clock in the evening that puts the final test upon a man's disposition. When you see a man bucking crowds, taking a blow from the edge of a suitcase on a perfectly inoffensive, homeward-bound calf, the while a horizontal umbrella finds a sudden resting place in the small of his back, without retaliation, you may know you've come across a pretty good sort of chap.

Morton Godfrey not only failed to retaliate—he kept on whistling; perhaps in a way that was a sort of retaliation, for he had no respect for key or tempo. When he reached the fifth note with a sweeping intake of breath it was a little melancholy, I will say. But had you known what the last twenty-four hours had offered him, your hat would have been off to his cheerful irony. A perfect day! "Gosh, what a day!" he sotto voiced as he dodged the swinging boots of a bundled child and plunged into his car.

The trouble began at about midnight the night before, when the thermometer dropped 20 degrees, and was carried forward by the absence of the chore man and the failure of Morton's alarm clock to "go off." A hastily opened egg, which had boiled one minute instead of six as ordered, precipitated catastrophe. A rapid fire conversation with his soul mate, in which he suggested a destination for the new cook which did not conform to her ideas of a gentleman's vocabulary (and which met with the response that the new pastry shop served a very good breakfast), led to a rather hasty exit minus the customary kiss.

This hurt, and Morton's first act upon reaching the office had been to call up the house. The bone of contention, with a brogue that had a multitude of good consonants, told him his wife had already left for town. "Movies, O'm thinkin'," the brogue said, and that hurt more.

If he had known that Nettle went to town because she was too unhappy to stay at home it would have been salve to his wounded conscience, but he didn't know it, and at intervals through the long and tortuous day he concocted little plans for his return at night which should at once and permanently dispel the cloud hanging aloft and bring Nettle—a little contritely—to his arms.

At 7 o'clock he called the house again. Nettle had not returned and the complexion of his thoughts changed a bit. This was something new, indeed. There was quite a touch of irony in his choice of a tune.

Seated in the car, he opened the paper to the page of theatrical announcements. Of course it was nonsense, but if Nettle was not at home when he reached there he believed that he would go back to the city and see some good show.

He had worked himself up to quite a dramatic mood when he became conscious that the car was at a standstill. He turned to the window for idle contemplation of the figures at the station. Idle for but a moment, however. Standing at the news-stand a woman's form caught his eye. She was short and plump, he judged, for the ankle generously displayed had a charmingly curved outline. Her arm showed round, too, in the tight coat sleeve. Her skirt was of a length which he had to admit he had often scathingly condemned in talks with Nettle and her heels were—yes, they certainly were absurdly high. But with it all there was an allure about her, a "Je ne sais quoi" that could not be denied. Perkiest little hat he had seen for one while and a something about the cant of her head that suggested everything his present rebellious fancy demanded. If her face lived up to the glimpse, he was vouchsafed she must be a "winner," that was all.

Why not find out?

Morton sprang to the door and watch in hand made so convincing an appeal that the stern guardian of the portals swung the lever and he jumped to the platform. At the same instant the sharp clang of the gong startled the woman at the news-stand. She turned swiftly and Morton found himself beaming expectantly into the face of his own wife.

The story in his eyes was one any woman could read and not knowing anything about the fascinating vision which had inspired it, she blushed brightly and sparkled at him quite as he had hoped the vision might.

"What on earth are you doing at this station at this time?" she asked.

"Oh! I don't know. I thought I might meet you."

"How did you recognize me so quickly from behind?"

"I knew your hat," he lied jauntily.

"That's just what I was thinking of. I only bought it about two hours ago. That's certainly one on you."

"Here's our car. Come along!" he countered, and sliding his hand into her arm, he skipped with her down the crowded platform.

As they entered their own door, "What's that thing you're trying to whistle?" Nettle asked.

"That? Oh, that's the thing they play at the movies, isn't it?" And shamelessly below pitch he sang, "This is the end of a perfect day!"

300 British Nurses Died in War.

Three hundred women nurses of Great Britain died while serving in the World war.



Albert Kuhn

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Choose Occupation Carefully.

When you have found your place, you will know it, and everybody else will know it. There will be no doubt about it. If you are where you belong, you will be strong, resourceful, original; you will be contented and happy, and at least comparatively successful. Choose that occupation which will call out the man in you, that which will develop your greatest strength and symmetry of manhood, personal nobility. Manhood is greater than wealth and grander than fame. Personal nobility is greater than any calling or any reward that it can bring.—Orison Swett Marden in Chicago News.

Overweighted Dog.

There is a farmer in Virginia who for a long time good naturedly complied with the requests of amateur hunters for the loan of his dog. Finally, however, the farmer's patience was exhausted and he thus delivered himself to a man who asked for the dog one day: "See here, my friend, there wasn't a better water dog living until you shooting gents took to borrowing him. Now his hide is so full of shot that he'd sink to the bottom like a brick."—Philadelphia Ledger.

To Get Rid of Red Ants.

The following is recommended by the United States Department of Agriculture: Make a sirup of ordinary cane sugar and water, rather thin, with the addition of not more than three-fourths of 1 per cent sodium arsenate, which is poison. Saturate small sponges with the sirup and place about where the ants are found. They carry the mixture to their nests and feed it to their young and queens, which eventually destroys the colony.

Safety First.

Preparatory to showing Charlie his new sister, his father said, "What do you say to getting a new baby at our house, sonny?" Charlie thought a moment and then said, "We'd better be careful, daddy; let's just rent one till we see how we like it, for Billy (Charlie's chum) says he is tired of his; it yells all the time."

Value of Education.

The most important thing one can acquire in school is not the information gained but the habit of study established. With a mind trained to study one has the ability to work at the solution of the problems which come up in life. Education gives one comprehension while lack of training causes bewilderment.

Where She Caught It.

Little Mildred had often been told that she had hair and eyes just like her mother's. One day she was playing on the street when a lady spoke to her and remarked pleasantly: "What pretty red hair you have." "Yes," glibly answered Mildred, "I caught it from mother."

Independence of Solitude.

It is easy to live in the world after the world's opinion, it is easy in solitude to live after your own, but the great man is he who in the midst of the throng keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.—Emerson.

Sign of Equality.

Parallel lines of equal length as the sign of equality were first adopted by Robert Records, who wrote a book on algebra in 1557.

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" 1908	142,413.20
" 1910	607,390.23
" 1912	1,008,666.37
" 1914	1,287,124.62
" 1916	1,412,886.06
" 1918	1,691,775.12
Nov. 17, 1919	2,198,861.53
Feb. 28, 1920	2,299,262.14
Apr. 28, 1921	2,740,220.74

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